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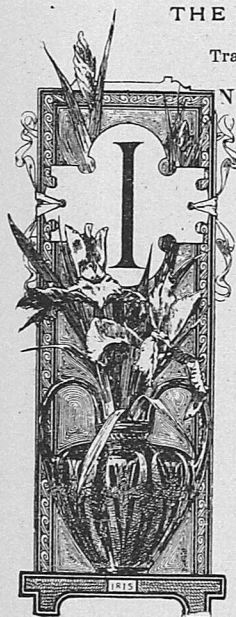


THE MODERN HOUSE—ITS DECORATION AND FURNITURE.—XIV.

BY A. SANDIER.

THE YOUNG LADY'S ROOM.

Translated from the *Revue Illustrée*.



IN the first story there now remains only one chamber to furnish, the one situated over the office, and marked (H) in the general plan of the house. To define it we will allot it to the young lady, and in view of this we will study a simple, soft decoration of moderate expense, for we must not lose sight of the fact that this department will be occupied for a relatively short time; the age for leaving the parents abode is soon reached, and all rich and costly furnishings, all luxurious and high-priced materials will be out of place there. Simplicity is prescribed then as well by the character that we wish to express as by reason of the short time our work needs use.

The walls are hung with wall-paper or with printed material to a height of about eight feet. What remains of the vertical surface, the frieze, the cornice and ceiling, are painted in oil. The chimney-piece, like the furniture, is of very light wood—fir or sycamore; it is composed of a canopy suggesting that of the bed and of two cupboards, between which is a mirror. The mantel will be of square tiles, decorated with a graceful pattern—a young woman playing with birds for example.

At the left we find an etagère and an easy chair, covered with material matching that of the bed; at the right a chiffonier. On the doors of this elegant little piece, and on the doors of the

cupboards of the chimney-piece, we will place flowering branches of trees, painted, or still better, inlaid.

The bed, with many regrets, we have been forced to put into one corner, on account of the small size of the room. Small columns support an arched canopy decorated with butterflies, and hung with a light material, which falls at the bedside, protecting it from direct contact with the wall.

The wall and frieze are decorated on a like plan. We have drawn most of our ideas from lace work and trees in flower.

In the angles of the frieze and ceiling we will paint apple branches arranged *en espalier*, as in the modern nurseries, where the trees are forced to follow geometric lines. They will be delicately modelled and trained on gold wire.

In the middle of the ceiling a gray vellum is spread like an aerial carpet. It is perforated with openings set off with designs traced in gold lines and accompanied with little designs running into the frieze.

It would be tasty, perhaps, for this apartment, which should last only a short time, to arrange the whole in accordance with the style of the day, and put it in harmony with the fancies of the prevailing fashion for the toilet of ladies.

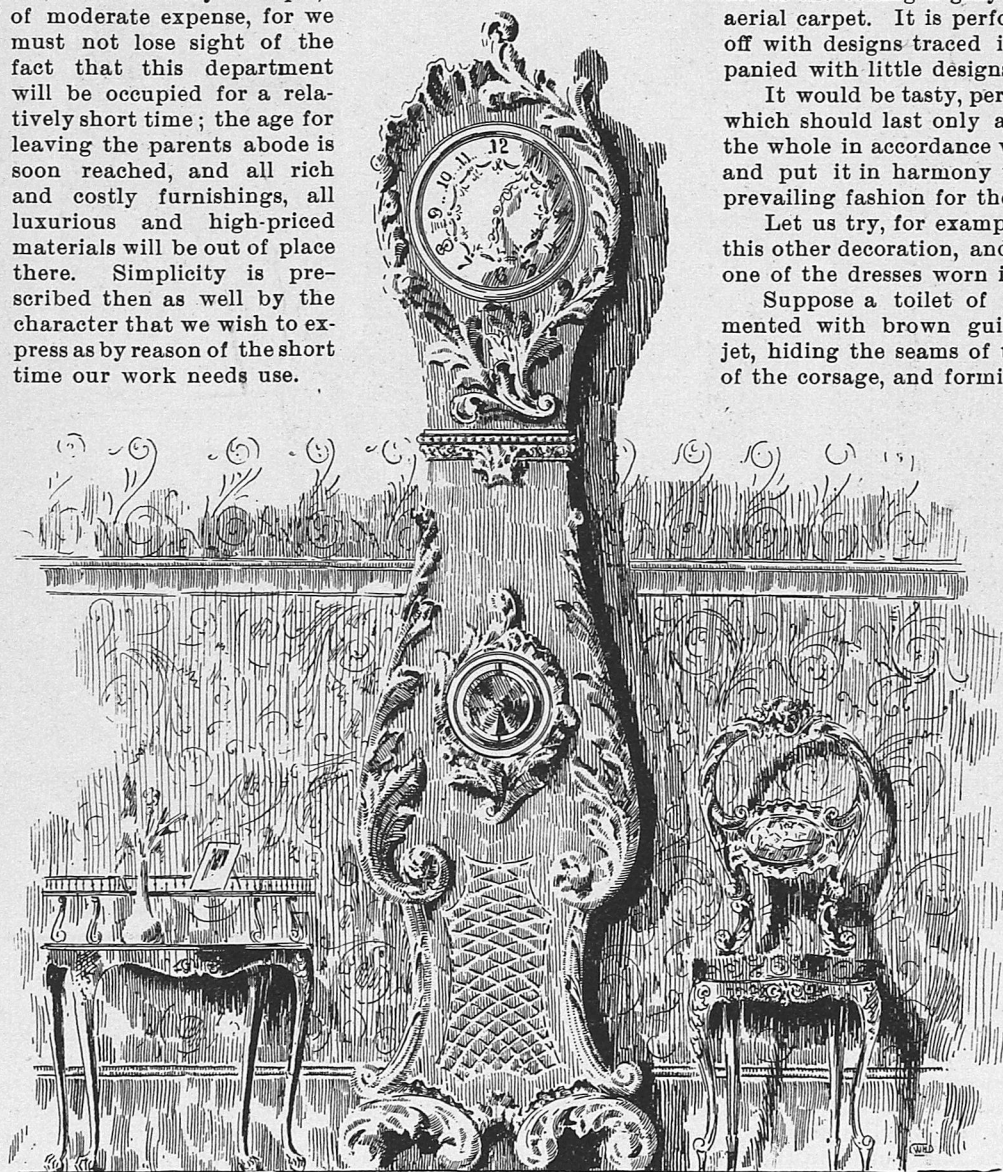
Let us try, for example, to realize the idea of this other decoration, and take as starting point one of the dresses worn in spring of 1891.

Suppose a toilet of gray Tibet richly ornamented with brown guipure lace, studded with jet, hiding the seams of the skirt, the upper part of the corsage, and forming tabs over the hips.

We will hang the walls of the room with a material of the same tone, and in place of painted lace work we will put on the ceiling and on the seams a seal brown guipure lace, the design of which shall be carried out—black jet nails arranged on the centres, ends of shelves and all places we wish to make prominent.

The curtains of the bed and windows would be treated in a dark manner, with this difference, however, that the guipure should dominate and almost completely hide the gray material.

In short, the upholsterer of to-day, by this means, without great effort of the imagination and contenting himself simply observing and following the charming con-



HALL CLOCK IN LOUIS XV. STYLE. DESIGNED AND MANUFACTURED BY GEORGE W. SMITH & CO., PHILADELPHIA.

ceptions of our dress-makers, would be able each year to vary his hangings, to rejuvenate them at each renewal, and to give them the stamp of actuality.

The apartments for children will present a great similarity to that of the one we have just given. We may, nevertheless treat it still more economically, while seeking to give them a tone which will be pleasant to the little occupants.

We will develop, for example, within the reach and height of the waist above the wainscoting, one of those stories so well illustrated by Walter Crane. These pictures in colors, so animated yet harmonious in design, so precise and conscientious, would be at the same time only a recreation and an instructor for their eyes.

It will be well also to set apart for them a room where they can have their plays without danger of accidents and serious falls, and still more of remonstrances, incessant admonitions and

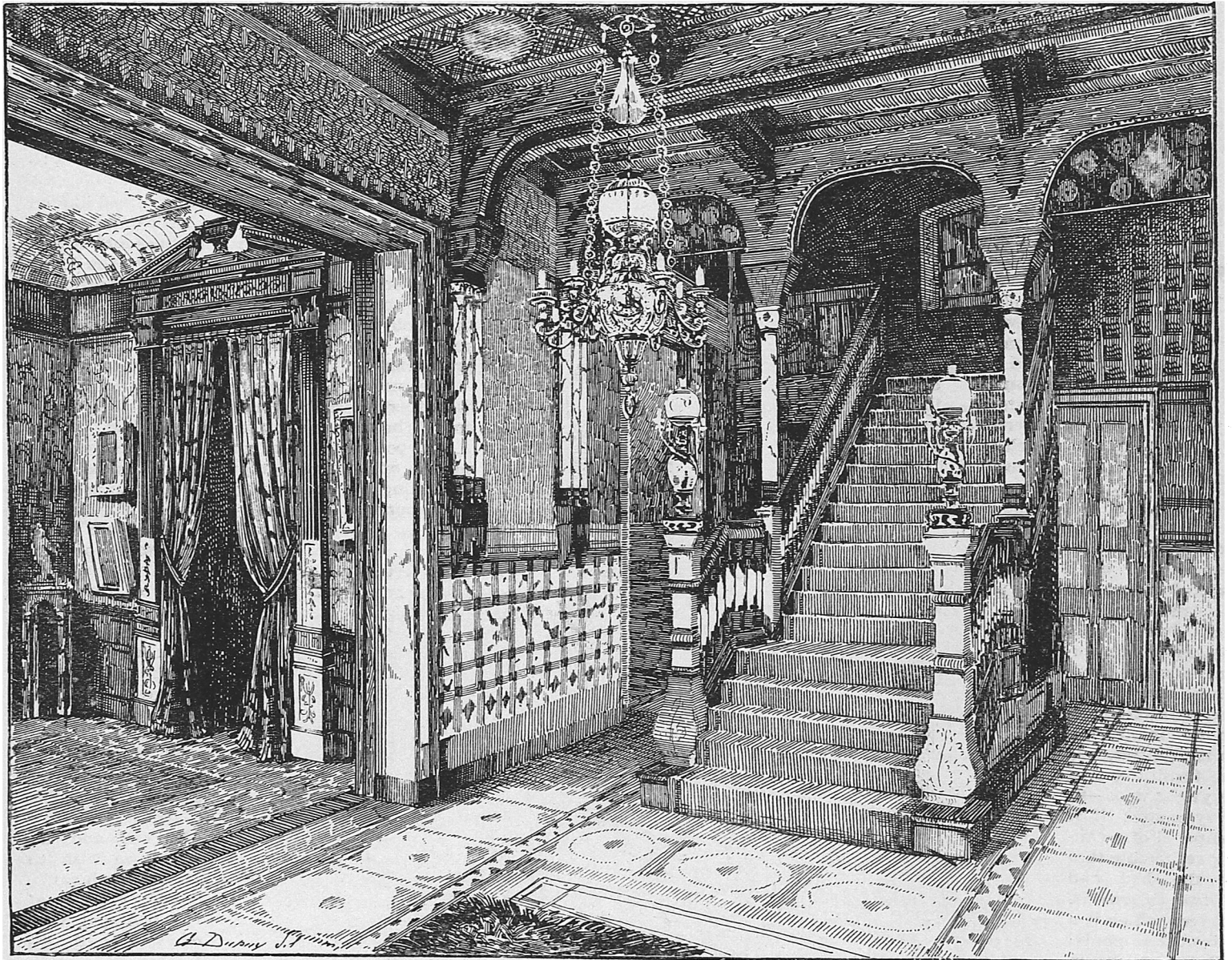
opinion of Alfred de Musset, who wished that we spoil all of them, and also that of Victor Hugo, who in his indulgent and majestic serenity as grandpa, allowed them to be too much the masters of his work-room.

We commence at last to understand the utility of such a room. Several houses are already provided with them, and in a few years the "children's hall" will certainly become one of the indispensable parts of a dwelling.

The furniture used in it—the tables, seats, desks—will be expressly made for their size; and while following correctly the teachings of hygiene, we will avoid the useless and cumbrous by a judicious selection.

ODD CHAMBERS.

The second story of our house offers plenty of room to permit our arranging several chambers more.



HALL IN MR. P. A. B. WIDENER'S MANSION, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

prohibitions of any kind. It will be a sort of hall or open place, where they could dispose of their books and playthings. We will then give them up entirely, not however, urged by an egotistic desire and with the secret wish of getting rid of their soft importunities, but guided on the contrary, by the pleasure of making them agreeable, of putting them at ease, and to possess and hold them in the midst of us in the very centre of our dwelling.

Let us carefully avoid imitating the English, who confine their children in a nursery, under the mercenary care of maids and governesses, and keep them as exiles from the rest of the family.

"In truth," says Montaigne, "we see yet nothing so pretty as the little children in France." It is somewhat like the

To study a furnishing and a particular decoration for each one of these would allure us too far, and lead us inevitably to repetitions and monotony. We will not try then for these rooms, destined for friends and young men, to even sketch such a plan, but we will be content simply with designing several styles of bedsteads, which may serve as a starting point in the decorative composition of a chamber, and furnish it, so to speak, with the point of departure.

The first type is made in three different kinds of wood. The light tints represent oak, deeper tints represent walnut, relieved with some dashes of black.

The second type, somewhat highly worked in shape, will be made of pitch-pine and placed in a young man's chamber. Over the five panels as a whole we have thrown an apple

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

branch with opening buds and two butterflies. Declytra flowers follow the curves of the cross-piece to the head board.

The third will suit a young girl. It will be in light wood, wild roses unroll their festoons lengthwise of the two side panels, and at the top envelop a medallion containing a portrait.

The three following head boards present a more sober view. Their square model calls for another style of ornamentation. We will make them in dark wood, mahogany, oak or walnut. We have chosen for the first, as principal feature, a child's form, holding light sprigs; a succession of fir branches arranged geometrically occupies each side. The second is surmounted by a frieze of carved entwining carrying chrysanthemums in the centres, the flowers treated geometrically. The panels below are decorated with a bed of the same flowers arranged in a freer and less conventional style. The third is

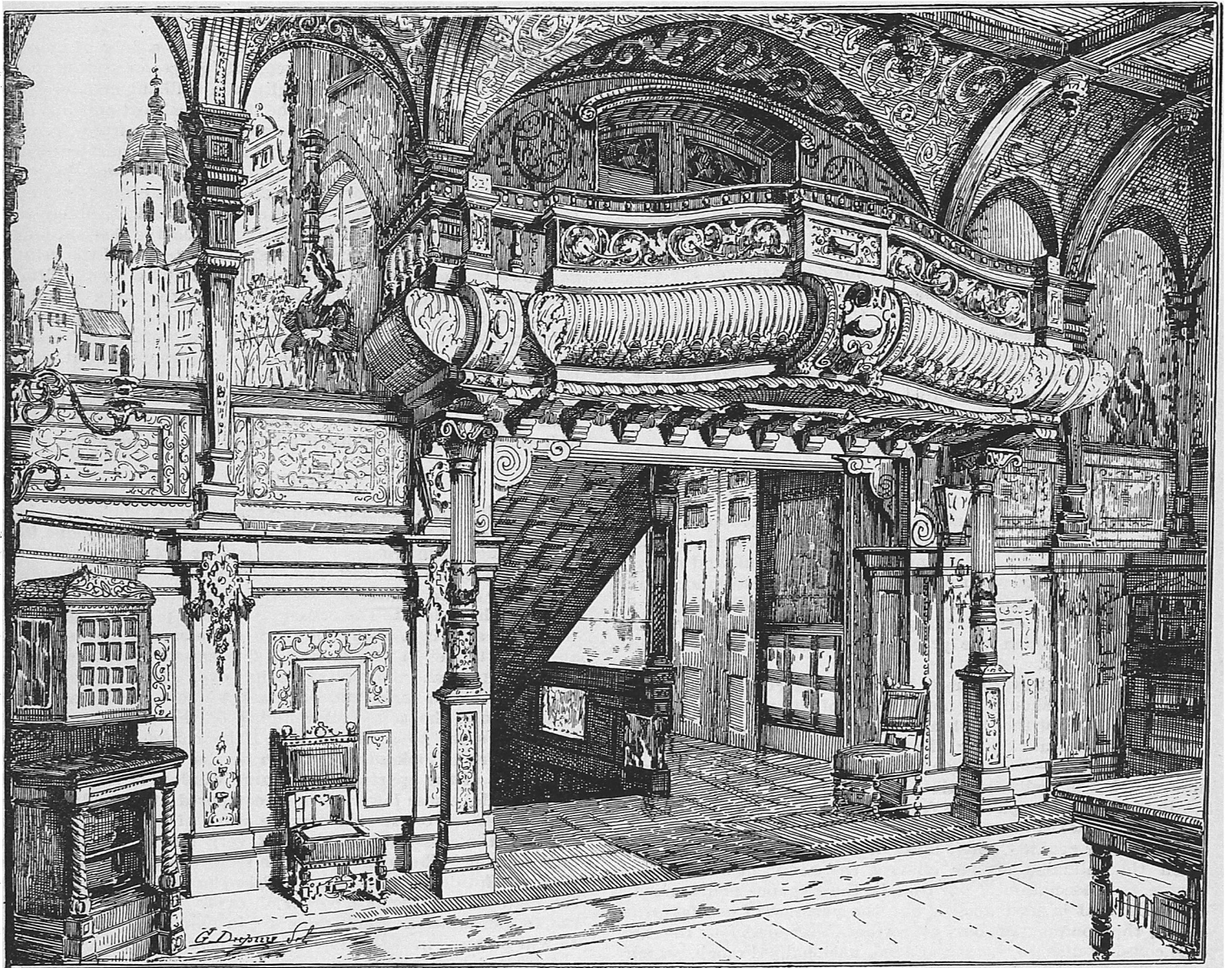
prised at the ease with which this method, at so little cost and without carving or changing, presents so many real advantages. Perhaps we must seek for the explanation of the discredit into which it seems to have fallen, in its cheapness, which puts it within the reach of all the shops.

For a child's bed the four-cornered posts, connected by wooden bars, carry a light canopy, on which, as well as on the bed quilt, are embroidered silhouettes of children—but modern children.

We could not do better than to imprint on them the spirited compositions of Bouisset and Boutet de Mouvel.

THE BATH ROOM.

Why did the use of the bath, so general in the middle ages, when every town had its bathing place, and every house



DINING-ROOM IN MR. P. A. B. WIDENER'S MANSION, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

inlaid; a medallion in enamel, emerging from garlands of geranium leaves and flowers, which are pendant at the sides.

The last type, of a more elegant style, has for its principal decoration a carved figure in a large central medallion. Formerly, such a conception well executed could be applied only to costly furniture. But to-day, thanks to machinery, a figure modeled by one of the masters can be reproduced in wood with perfect exactness and at little expense. Our great sculptors, in fact, do not disdain to spread their talent on these little things. We have seen book covers illustrated, so to speak, with a bas relief of Falguière.

We could as well achieve results just as valuable by galvanoplasty, and where we allow full liberty we are sur-

prised at the ease with which this method, at so little cost and without carving or changing, presents so many real advantages. Perhaps we must seek for the explanation of the discredit into which it seems to have fallen, in its cheapness, which puts it within the reach of all the shops?

Then there was displayed in the bath rooms an exaggerated and perfectly irrational luxuriousness. They covered bath tubs with paintings by renowned artists, and under cover of ample plumed canopies, raised them on feet of wood, carved and gilded.

Now that the bath has taken a definite place with us, we fall into the opposite extreme. We do not try to make the least decoration in the room reserved for it; it is seldom if ever we dare risk a timid and common-place ornamentation on the walls, such as an aquatint paint.

The plumber puts in his apparatus and runs his pipes along the partition without troubling himself in the least about arrangement.

Yet, while accepting the bath tub and attachments, such as the trade delivers to us, we may use them more from a decorative standpoint. To this end, we will place a background to them around the room, which, while agreeing with the forms of the plumbing, will force it to participate in the general decoration. This is what we have tried to do in our design, which represents the side where the bath tub is placed. This has a douche overhead and mixing cocks, with thermometer, which will give water of the desired temperature.

The wall is ornamented with square tiles, on which a line, enclosing bath tub, douche and cocks, outlines a background which we will decorate with rushes (flags), arranged geometrically, while the central panel, of a lighter tint, will be covered with open vegetations.

Here and there, in the midst of the aquatic plants, will be shell-fish, fish, and one or two improvised marine monsters, whose brilliant eyes will be electric jewels.

THE PANTRY.

As the kitchen, to which this is the complement or auxiliary, the pantry should be relatively spacious. Our design gives the arrangement of the dining-room pantry. In the middle the plate holders, on each side cupboards for dishes, glassware, linen, desserts. On the doors we will, in simple silhouettes, recall the charming forms of the Venetian glasses and Florence flasks. The decanters and champagne glasses will furnish as equally a precious contingent for decoration of the cornice, frieze and woodwork of the cupboards.

Near the window we will place a water tap in a shell basin, large and deep, for the glassware.

Directly below this room, in the basement, we have put the kitchen pantry, where we will find repeated the plate-holders, cupboards, analogous to those above, but of a less highly wrought joinery. Finally, in place of the water tap, the indispensable sink.

THE KITCHEN.

This is a room in French houses, too generally sacrificed, and to which air and light are very scantily allowed. In Paris, in many buildings, you will find it consigned below to an obscure corner, or looking on a court yard stagnant or nauseous, with dubious daylight by means of reflectors, dull and dusty. It is a corner opened with reluctance on the vestibule or the passage, and hardly affording room to move in easily.

In the country, even if of large size, it also has numerous inconveniences, of which the principal are insufficient light and difficulty of access.

Such is, almost everywhere, the place reserved for cooking.

Nevertheless, should it not be one of the most open, airy, light rooms, one of the best arranged rooms of the house? It is the least we could do for the art so truly French, in which we are inimitable—cooking, and to the temptations of which no man of spirit is really insensible.

If we happen to pass the frontiers, to leave our country for a time, then we appreciate more vividly the seductions and charms of our cooking, and it must be admitted that it is not so much the mildness of our climate, the sound of our mother tongue, the association of our friends, the elegance and grace of our ladies that is most missed, but the perfume of our favorite dishes, the bouquet of our old wines, that delicious ragout, that complex dish so savory and so nationally French, which is the finest cooking!

Let us open then wide our doors! Begrudge neither space nor air, nor light, and in our house let us give a room truly worthy of it.

CONCLUSION.

In ending here the course of these studies, we hope to have nearly completely filled the program, which we have traced, and to have given an exact view of what should be sought for in the decoration and furnishing of the modern house. Happy if we have been able to plant some fecund germs in the vast field of art, and thus contribute to the propagation of ideas so dear, and of which time, without any doubt, after many struggles and attempts, will assure the certain triumph.

For art is not as independent as it claims to be, and artists far from directing the taste of their epoch, are oftener forced to follow and to conform thereto.

THE DECORATION OF MR. P. A. B. WIDENER'S HOUSE IN PHILADELPHIA.—I.



HE magnificently decorated mansion of Mr. P. A. B. Widener, at the corner of Broad and Girard Aves., Philadelphia, furnishes a typical example of modern American decoration, and as such will be welcome to our readers. We have only space in the present issue for illustrating the hall and dining-room, but in our next issue we will give illustrations of the parlor, reception-room, library and bed-room in the same mansion.

HALL.

As we enter the first door we tread upon a floor of polished marble mosaic, containing 583 separate pieces of marble to the square foot, that reflects the light in a brilliant manner. The door jambs and architraves of the door are also of polished marble, while the wainscot is a mosaic of polished marbles from all parts of the world. The ceiling, which is a Moresque pattern in soft gold colors, is laid out in panels to correspond with the design in the mosaic floor, both wall, floor and ceiling harmonizing with different colored marbles. This work, together with the marble newel posts of the stairway, and the marble balustrade and pillars supporting several of the beams of the ceiling, as shown in the illustration, have been executed by the firm of Sharpless & Watts of Philadelphia, and the work has been carried out in a very successful manner. The gold caps on the balustrades of the stairs, together with the profusion of colored marbles in the hall-way, reflect a soft and gleaming light, giving the mind an impression of splendor that no other material could bestow. The sidewalls of the hall are in a soft sunset red color, with a deep frieze, while the border above the wainscoting is in dull gold, harmonizing with the rest of the surroundings.

DINING-ROOM.

Our illustration of the dining-room shows a balcony, where musicians can perform, during meals, and this is only one item in this magnificent room. The apartment is 40 feet square, the balcony being on the east end, with a wide door underneath facing the grand hallway. On the west side there is a large door which leads into the conservatory and picture gallery; on the north side is a very fine Caen stone carved mantel, set in an alcove 12 feet in length, with a fine mosaic hearth, with designs of fruits and flowers spreading over same. Right above the mantel is a large stained glass window, having a central female figure, the soft mellow lights of the window changing the Caen stone to an ivory tint. The colors in the window make the room look sunshiny even in the dullest day. On the south side of the apartment is a large window 14 feet high and 12 feet wide, whose lower glass is composed of very fine transparent Mexican onyx, with a grille work of silver. The upper lights of the glass are composed of very fine leaded glass, of a uniform tint. The room, as will be seen from our illustration, is German Gothic in style, and is finished in antique oak. Above the high wainscoting is a border of panels in carved wood, and the wall decorations above same are in painted tapestry, which, as will be seen in the illustration, repeat in the painting the constructed arches of the walls, showing a glimpse of a German Mediaeval castle in the background. The figures introduced into these tapestries are members of Mr. Widener's own family, having the dress of the sixteenth century. There is a balcony scene, musical scene, hunting scene, etc., and the painting of the foliage, trees, castles, figures, etc., is truly wonderful. There are four octagonal silver and oak glass cabinets in the dining-room, one in each corner. The glasses are so arranged that they reflect the contents a hundred fold. There is an immense oak table, with oak chairs to match, standing on an immense Oriental rug. The entire apartment gives an impression at once historical and impressive, and is one of the finest dining-rooms in America.

The whole decoration of the house was under the supervision and executed by Mr. George Herzog, artist and decorator, 1332 Chestnut St., Philadelphia.

(To be continued.)